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Message from the Mayor

On Thursday, September 14, the House Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution held a hearing on the District of Columbia Fair and Equal House Voting Rights Act of 2006. The legislation would grant the District full voting rights but would not upset the balance of power in Congress because it would also create a new seat in Utah, an overwhelmingly Republican state.

The bill does not affect the number or status of the District's electoral votes or the ability of the District to pursue statehood.

I've worked with Congresswoman Norton and Congressman Tom Davis on this issue and am confident that this bill brings us closer than we've been in a generation to having a vote in Congress.

I strongly support the approach of granting District of Columbia residents voting representation that is contained in this legislation which offers a politically neutral approach to ending this historic injustice.

Passage of this legislation will bring the country closer to providing all citizens the full range of rights safeguarded and preserved in the US Constitution.

More than half a million citizens here in the District of Columbia are denied the fundamental voting rights that citizens elsewhere in the country take for granted. Thousands of District of Columbia residents have gone to war to safeguard those rights for others, both in America and abroad, and our residents pay in excess of \$3 billion in federal taxes.

Witnesses at Thursday's hearing included the Governor of Utah, Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.; John Fortier, a research fellow with the American Enterprise Institute; Adam H. Charnes, an attorney with Kilpatrick Stockton LLP and Professor Jonathan Turley, professor of public interest law at George Washington University's Law School.

This hearing marks the first time witnesses will testify before the US Congress that the denial of democracy in Washington, DC is a problem that needs to be fixed. Witnesses had differing opinions on the solution.

In May, the House Committee on Government Reform passed this legislation with overwhelming bipartisan support. The House Judiciary Committee, however, has primary jurisdiction over the issue. Judiciary Committee Chairman James Sensenbrenner has committed to bringing the bill to a mark-up in the full committee following Thursday's hearing.

I am extremely pleased by this step in our struggle for voting rights for the citizens of the District of Columbia. I will keep you up to date on any further action in the Congress on this important piece of legislation.



AGENCY WEBSITES

Department of Human
Services

Office of Tax and
Revenue

Department of Parks and
Recreation

Department of
Employment Services

Metropolitan Police
Department

Office of Boards and
Commissions

Commission on the Arts
and Humanities

LINKS TO OTHER WEBSITES

Hands on DC

DC Convention and
Tourism

DC Public Library

New Communities Initiative Helps Residents Realize Their Vision

The New Communities Initiative is instrumental in making sure that District neighborhoods like Lincoln Heights and Barry Farms benefit from the improved economic conditions and opportunities of our city. This initiative helps residents to drive and shape the redevelopment of their neighborhoods.

Over the course of each 4-day workshop held in August and September, residents and community partners drop in and share their ideas about what the community should look like. Planners, architects, and social service providers will help residents to create and revise redevelopment options.

When I envisioned the New Communities Initiative it was to equip residents with the tools to improve their lives and neighborhoods by reducing violent crime, poverty, and unemployment rates as well as increasing access to quality education and housing.

Lincoln Heights is near great streets like Benning Road, East Capitol Street and Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue. The community also has a large number of neighborhood service providers and access to Metro.

Barry Farm is near Martin Luther King Avenue and Good Hope Road and to the Anacostia River, Poplar Point and St. Elizabeths East Campus. This neighborhood also will host a new government center, has access to the Anacostia Metro and includes the brand new Thurgood Marshall Academy.

The residents of both neighborhoods are charged with coming up with their vision of kind of neighborhood they will create for their daughters, sons, grandchildren, neighbors and friends -- the schools they will attend -- the jobs they will receive -- the parks they will play in -- the stores they will shop in -- and the homes they will live in.

Premiere of Documentary About DC Latino Community

"Through Our Eyes" will be shown on Channel 9 September 24 at 11 a.m.

On Wednesday, September 13, I watched the premiere of "Through Our Eyes," a documentary about the DC Latino community that highlights milestone events including the creation of the District's Office on Latino Affairs, the immigration of Central Americans to the District, the Mt. Pleasant disturbances in the 1990s and the progress in Latino education and health.

The premiere took place on September 13 at the Inter-American Development Bank. It will next be shown on Channel 9 on Sunday, September 24, at 11 a.m.

I encourage people to watch this film which tells the story of our city's Latino community in the words of the community itself. I am proud to be part of this production which shows that Washington, DC is a city made up of more than just politics and museums.

The film commemorates the 30th anniversary of the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs and features narration by members of the local Latino community including Sonia Gutierrez, executive director of the Carlos Rosario International Career Center and Public Charter School; Hugo Medrano, artistic director of the Gala Theatre; and, Elmer Huerta, Director of Cancer Prevention, Washington Cancer Institute.



Palisades Residents and Community Leaders Break Ground for a New Ball Park

On Saturday, September 9, residents celebrated the groundbreaking for the beginning of major renovations at the Palisades Ball Park Field at 5200 Sherrier Place, NW.

The new ball field will include a new artificial soccer field, an irrigation system for the existing baseball field, lighting on the existing baseball field, a new walkway throughout the park, refurbished basketball courts, new park benches and enhanced landscaping. The project is expected to be completed in 6 – 8 months.

I am pleased that this project is underway – I know that a number of people in the community, including members of the Friends of Palisades Park and the Palisades Citizens Association, have worked long and hard with staff at the DC Department of Parks and Recreation on the renovation plans. I am sure that the new fields and amenities will be well used by young and old.

This summer, the Department of Parks and Recreation has held two other groundbreakings – one at Lovejoy Park at 12th and E Streets, NE and one at Riggs-Lasalle Recreation Center on Riggs Road, NE -- and one grand opening at Lamond Recreation Center on Tuckerman Street, NE.

Woodson Heights Condominium Groundbreaking – A Promise Kept

After nearly three years, I was pleased to attend a groundbreaking ceremony for the Woodson Heights Condominiums in Southeast Washington, DC on Thursday, September 7.

The groundbreaking was held at the JC Nalle Elementary School playground, where I had declared that a positive change would come to this community. I wanted to be there to show the residents that I have not forgotten about them.

I am committed to building stronger communities throughout Washington, DC and rebuilding neighborhoods in Southeast DC.

AmeriDream is working with the District Government and the local community to demolish nine abandoned buildings and renovate two other abandoned buildings to create a new community with 106 affordable homes. The Jair Lynch Company and Marcus Asset Group, both Washington, DC-based companies, are also project partners.

Woodson Heights will be an example of what can happen when we all work together. – local government, community leaders, and committed nonprofit organizations, like AmeriDream. We have all worked hard to make sure that this neighborhood continues to have affordable housing.



District Activities



Mayor Williams and First Lady Diane Simmons Williams head to the polls to cast their votes in the September primary election.



Mayor Williams greets the First Lady of Chad Hinda Deby Itno.



Mayor Williams, Councilmembers Jack Evans, Marion Barry, Vincent Gray, Carol Schwartz, Chairman Linda Cropp and Mrs. John A. Wilson unveil a portrait of the late John A. Wilson. The portrait painted by artist Semmie Knox will remain on display in the John A. Wilson Building, named in Wilson's honor. John A. Wilson served as councilmember for Ward 2 and as DC Council chairman.

Community News

- [DC Public Libraries Become Wi-Fi Hot Spots](#)
- [Oxon Run Park to Get Makeover](#)
- [Mayor Williams Issues Statement Remembering Victims of 9-11 Terror Attacks](#)

Upcoming Events

[View All News Releases](#)

9/20	Fall HIV Testing Kick-Off 1 pm - 7 pm Freedom Plaza 14th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW	9/29	DC Office of Personnel District-wide Job Fair 9 am - 5 pm Washington Hilton Hotel 1919 Connecticut Avenue, NW (bring resumes and DC Form 2000)
9/16	Gun Buy-Back 9 am - 7 pm First District Station 415 4th Street, SW Sixth District Station 100 42nd Street, NE Seventh District Station 2455 Alabama Avenue, SE	10/21	12th Annual Race for Mental Health 9 am Rock Creek Park, Fitzgerald Tennis Center 16th and Kennedy Street, NW
9/26	Grand Opening District of Columbia Unified Communications Center	10/27	"Moneywise" Consumer Information Fair 10 am - 3 pm One Judiciary Square 441 4th Street, NW, Old Council Chamber
		10/28	Household Hazardous Waste and E-Cycling Collection 8 am - 3 pm Benning Road Trash Transfer Station 3200 Benning Road, NE

